

The Peter Jacobus House  
Allwood Road above Dwas Line Road  
Clifton, Passaic County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-559

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16-CLIF  
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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer  
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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The Peter Jacobus House  
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Owner: The First National Bank of Nutley, New Jersey

Date of Erection: About 1785

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Peter Jacobus (died 1805)

Present Condition: Original, but with walls of minor unit later extended by frame construction to same height as those of major unit, and roofed in line with that of the latter

Number of Stories: One and one-half, and part cellar

Materials of Construction:

Foundation - stone masonry

Exterior walls - local brown stone in coursed ashlar for front of major unit only; rubble for others, up to eave line all around; frame gable ends and upper part of front and rear of minor unit

Interior walls - stone party wall and frame partitions

Chimney - brick, built into inside of gable end walls

Roof - gable, modern rubberoid shingle roofing

Historical Data:

The identity of the first owner of this house and the date of its erection are here determined as the result of search of title in the County records.

Administration upon the estate of Peter Jacobus deceased, intestate, late of Aquackanonk Township, Essex County, was granted to his son and heir

Garret P. Jacobus in 1805. On 21 December in the same year, the last named and his wife Mary, gave their deed conveying to John James Speer some 80 acres in the northeast corner of the whole tract, describing the boundary lines as beginning at the corner of John P. Ludlow's land and in the line of John A. Van Riper, thence south 44 degrees east 99.66 to Stinker's Mill Bridge, thence down stream south 45 degrees west 8.68, thence north 44 degrees west to Ludlow's line, thence along his line north 4 degrees west 13.15. Also conveyed was one tract of lot No. 10, the total of the two tracts being 84.07 acres in Aquackanonk Township. Evidently grantor was selling off parts of the paternal estate.

John James Speer, the grantee abovenamed, died between 19 February 1823 and 28 December 1833, the dates of signing and probate of his will in which he devised to his wife, Lenah, the personal property which she brought with her at the time of marriage, and the privilege of occupying part of the dwelling house. To his son, Garret Speer, he devised the eastern lot, east of Dwas Line, one purchased of John M. Cumming, and the east end of the lot purchased from Garret P. Jacobus as above cited. On 10 July 1840, Elen Speer, widow of John J. Speer, gave deed releasing all her rights to the lands devised by the latter to the son, Garret J. Speer.

By his will of August 1863, proved 1st November 1866, Garret John Speer of Aquackanonk Township, then in Passaic County, abovenamed son and devisee bequeathed in turn, to his son Ralph, the "Homestead Farms" in which he then resided, including a 10 acre tract purchased of Walling Van Winkle, together with the dwelling house, barns and outhouses.

Ralph G. Speer, son and devisee, died shortly before 28 January 1873, intestate, in Aquackanonk Township, on which date his widow Elizabeth Speer and son, David V. B. Speer, partitioned for Administration of the estate, naming other heirs as minor daughters Annie and Caroline. By a decree of the Court of Chancery

of New Jersey, the estate and interest of the widow were sold at auction and thereafter conveyed to the son David by a deed of 22 December 1874. He held the property until 1st May 1889, on which date he conveyed it by deed to Frederick C. Streckfriss for \$6,000.

The last named passed it to Jose Agramonte on 3 April 1906, describing the property as bounded north by the road and land of Abraham Linford, deceased, east by John Van Winkle, south by Richard Post and said Van Winkle, and west by the heirs of Thomas Speer, deceased, "being the Homestead Farm of which Garret John Speer died seized and on which he resided at the time of his death, including the ten acres which he purchased of Walling Van Winkle, which two tracts taken together constituted the Homestead Farm," and containing in all fifty-six acres including the railroad, but excepting 21 acres south of this tract and the brook, 24.4 acres of the original tract were hereby conveyed.

Agramonte and his wife passed title to some 16 acres thereof (including the house here considered) on 28 January 1929 to George T. Hannen, describing the premises as being then within the city of Clifton (formerly part of Aquackanonk Township), from whom it passed to the First National Bank of Nutley by Sheriff's deed of 26 November 1935, following legal proceedings, and they are the owners at the time your survey of the house.

#### Bibliography:

A search of title in Land and Probate records of Essex and Passaic Counties by Joseph Benenati, H.A.B.S. abstractor

Lewis D. Cook  
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams  
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.  
District Officer